(b) if so, whether poor allocation of funds has resulted in great shortage of teachers, especially in primary schools, which is the starting point of all progress, which significantly contributes towards poverty alleviation; and

(c) what steps Government propose to adopt so as to fulfil the constitutional obligation of providing free and compulsory education for all children between the age of 6 and 14?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The expenditure on education by the Central and State Governments as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was 4.01 during 1990-91 in 3.49 in 1997-98. According to the Sixth All India Educational Survey (1993), 20.12 per cent primary schools in the country were having only one teacher and 41.92 per cent had only two teachers. Government launched a number of schemes like Operation Blackboard, District Primary Education Programme and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which *inter alia* provide assistance to State Governments for appointment of additional teachers in primary schools. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is also a holistic step to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE) through a time bound, integrated approach in partnership with States and local bodies and the community. It aims to provide relevant and quality elementary education to all children in the 6-14 age group by 2010 with a special focus on educational needs of girls, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other children in difficult circumstances.

Private technical university in Chhattisgarh

2821. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal to establish the first private university of India in Chhattisgarh, for providing technical education;

(b) whether the UGC is in favour of such private universities in the country; and

(c) what are the implications and advantges of such private universities?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.